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Holy  
Communion

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from Miss Jones  
April 18<sup>th</sup> / 6

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THE  
**HOLY COMMUNION.**

PART I.

**ITS NATURE AND BENEFITS,**  
WITH  
A NOTICE OF SOME COMMON OBJECTIONS  
TO RECEIVING IT.

PART II.

*AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT IS REQUIRED*  
OF THEM WHO COME TO

**The Lord's Supper,**  
IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.

BY THE

**REV. W. H. RIDLEY, M.A.,**

RECTOR OF HAMBLEDEN, BUCKS, AND LATE STUDENT OF  
CHRISTCHURCH;

*Author of "A Plain Tract on Confirmation."*

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# THE HOLY COMMUNION.

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## PART I.

*A plain statement of its nature and benefits,  
with a notice of some of the most common  
objections to receiving.*

THE object of this little book is to explain what God has taught us about the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is not so much intended for educated persons, who can read larger and better treatises on the same subject, as for simple and unlearned ones; only let all remember that this book is not intended to amuse those who read it, but to instruct them and do them good. I hope, then, that any person who takes it up will, before



he reads any further, ask God to let the book do him good. He may say this short prayer: "O blessed Jesus, make this book to do me good, and to lead me to understand and love Thy Blessed Sacrament. Amen."

I shall divide what I write into three parts, under three heads.

I. I shall endeavour to explain the nature of this Sacrament.

II. I shall speak of the benefits which it is intended to convey to us.

III. I shall speak of the duty of receiving it, and of some of the excuses which persons constantly make for not coming to it—I shall hope to put some directions how to prepare for it into Part II.

I. As to the *nature* of this Sacrament, what it *is*.—This we learn from the accounts given us in the Bible of our Lord's first appointing it. We read these in St. Matt. xxvi. 26–28,

St. Mark, xiv. 22–24, St. Luke, xxii. 19, 20, 1 Corinthians, xi. 23–25. If you read these passages attentively, you will see plainly that our Blessed Lord, as He was sitting at supper with His disciples, only a few hours before Judas betrayed Him, took up some of the bread which was on the table, broke it into pieces, blessed it, (probably by laying His Hand on it,) and then gave a piece to each one of them, saying to them, "Take, eat; this is My Body." Afterwards, He took up the cup which had wine in it, and He gave the cup to every one of them in turn, saying to them, "This is My Blood." He gave them bread, and He gave them wine, and He told them that these things were His Body and His Blood. Now it is plain that there was a sense in which they would not eat His Body, nor drink His Blood. For His *Natural* Body, or to use St. John's words.

“that which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled,” \* This suffered on the Cross the next day. And This Same Natural Body of our Blessed Lord, having been raised from the dead, is now at the Right Hand of God the Father in Heaven; and since it is of the same nature as our bodies, it cannot be at one time in more places than one. Read 1 Cor. x. 16. See how St. Paul speaks there of this Sacrament. It is plain, then, that in some way which we cannot understand, the Bread and Wine were to the disciples and are to us the “communion” or partaking of Christ’s Body and Blood. That is, when we take in a proper manner the Bread and Wine, blessed and consecrated as He has appointed, “in remembrance of” Him, we do with our souls receive and feed upon His

\* 1 John, i. 1.

Body and Blood; and His Body and Blood do feed and nourish our souls, as surely as Bread and Wine would feed and nourish our bodies. How this is, we cannot tell, nor need we care now to find out. We must not deny the truth of our Lord's words, "This is My Body," "This is My Blood;" and we are quite certain that the Elements, even after they are blessed, are still Bread and Wine as before.

It is exceedingly good of God to give us this gift in this way. For if He had bidden us take His Blessed Son's Body and Blood to feed upon in our souls, we might justly have made answer to Him, that they are so far above our reach, that we cannot possibly get them. But now He has given us the Bread and Wine in this Sacrament, to bring them to us. We can get this Bread and Wine; they are not too high for us to reach; so we can

have Christ's Body and Blood by taking this Sacrament properly, which, as I hope to show, we all can do.

So much, then, for the *nature* of this Sacrament. It is the means by which we, poor miserable creatures, are to take and feed upon the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and to pray in His Name. Read now St. John, vi. 51-58. This Sacrament is to be taken especially "in remembrance of" Christ; that is, when we come to It, we are to think of Christ dying for us on the Cross, and to bring the remembrance of His Death before God. By this Sacrament, we put God in mind of what Christ did for us, and beg Him, for the sake of His Precious Death, to have mercy on us. It is, in this way, the highest act of prayer that we can perform—the best way of carrying out our Lord's own words, "*Ye shall ask in My Name:*" it is bringing His Death

and Passion before His Father, and pleading for ourselves and for others through It.

II. What are the *benefits* which this Sacrament is intended to convey to us? I may say, in general, everything that we can desire for our souls; for Christ's Body and Blood are nothing else but Christ Himself. If, then, we take into us and eat His Body and Blood, we take and eat Christ Himself. This is what He says, in express words:—"He that eateth *Me*, even he shall live by *Me*."\* He becomes the Food of our souls. And we believe the same is true of what we feed on with our souls, that is true, we know, of what we eat and drink with our bodies. If the food be sour, or sweet, then it gives to our bodies its own sourness or sweetness. If medicine which we take be bitter, and be suited to cause

\* St. John, vi. 57.

strength, then our bodies receive from it bitterness and strength at the same time. And God employs the sign of meat and drink for this Sacrament, to teach us that He does the very same thing for our souls by this Sacrament, which He does continually for our bodies by our daily food. Now Christ has all good things in Himself. When we feed upon Him, therefore, we can have all good things, any one and every one which we wish for. If we wish that we knew God better, and that we were more wise about our salvation; or that we were more gentle, or more patient, or more loving, to each other, or more honest; or that we took more care about our words—we can have all this through the Sacrament, for Christ has all these things. He has *all* knowledge, *all* wisdom, gentleness, patience, love, and everything besides. So that, by taking Him in this Sacrament, we

can have any one of these graces, and all of them, if we desire it.

But there are two benefits which we derive from this Sacrament, which are specially mentioned in the Catechism; or we may say the benefits of this Sacrament are there mentioned under two heads: "the strengthening and refreshing of our souls." The use of bread and of other things which we eat is to give nourishment and strength to our bodies; the use of wine and other strong drinks is to refresh and revive and invigorate us. For our growth and general improvement, we need food to eat; when we are wearied, or faint, or low, wine or something of that kind is most acceptable and useful.

In the same way, in this Holy Sacrament we have Christ given us to nourish and strengthen our souls, to make us able to overcome the temptations to sin which Satan brings before us, to make



us more holy, more fond of heavenly things, that, as St. Peter says, we may "grow in grace."\* But there are times, as everyone knows who really tries to serve God, when we find it more difficult than usual. The temptation has come on more powerfully or more constantly than before, we are almost tired out with fighting against it; new temptations seem to start up as soon as we have got the better of an old one; friends seem to desert us; we have fallen into some unexpected trouble; or we have brought some great trouble upon ourselves, either by a mistake or by some fault of our own; or we feel unhappy, low in spirits, and we cannot tell the reason; we think God is angry with us, that He has forsaken us, or that our sins are too great to be forgiven. Then this Sacrament is given us to refresh and revive us; Christ

\* 2 Peter, iii. 18.

comes to us, then, to cheer up our spirits, to assure us that He loves us still, and is not going to leave us, that He will help us all the more against sin the more we want His help; so that we can go back after the Sacrament happy and cheerful, certain that we are not forsaken, and that we can get the better of our sins. These low feelings, then, are not intended to keep us away from the Sacrament; but they should make us more anxious to go to It, because It is specially intended to cheer us up and refresh us by driving them away.

III. I am come to the third point—the duty of all persons to receive this Sacrament.

1. It is Christ's plain and express command. When He appointed it, He said, "Do this in remembrance of Me." Christ's ministers "do this," by breaking and blessing the bread and blessing the

wine, just as He did. But how can the people "do this," if they do not come and receive what has been blessed? Christ's command extends to all. He did not say that some should "do this" and others might go without. But He gave one general express command; those who love Him will keep His command; and those who do not "do this" must be found at the last day to have broken His command. Nothing is plainer, if we choose to read and understand. And it does not matter what command of God we find, we must obey *all*; we may not pass over any one; we cannot say that it is not necessary, just because we do not choose to attend to it.

2. But our Lord has also said most distinctly, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." \*

\* St. John, vi. 53.

very certain that taking this Sacrament is the most evident way of eating Christ's Flesh and drinking His Blood.\* Unless we do this, our souls die, or are dead; the life goes out of them. They may still have the spark of life abiding, so that God's grace may stir it up and make it live again, but that is all! They are like a person whose last breath you are watching for. He breathes, but hope is gone: you know it is a mere question of *when* he shall die.

It is, then, a most awful thing to see so many persons, called Christians, everywhere, who never come near this Sacrament, and yet seem not the least uneasy because they stay away. We know that they are hurrying on day

\* We are quite sure that persons can eat Christ's Flesh and drink His Blood spiritually, when they are hindered from Holy Communion. But how they can be said to do so when they wilfully and obstinately refuse Holy Communion, it is not easy to see.

after day to the last judgment, breaking God's plain command, and with their soul dying, because they do not eat Christ's Flesh! They will take any excuse, satisfy themselves with any pretence, while they are as plainly as possible breaking God's command, and despising Christ's warning, "Ye have no life in you." Oh! how dreadful it is to think of!

3. But must it be only spoken of as a *duty*? It seems shocking to tell persons that they *must* do, what it is so very great a blessing that they *may* do. If children are to have a school-treat, or if men and women are invited by a gentleman to a harvest-feast or anything else of the kind, do they require to be driven to it? Do we find them hanging back, or sending excuses, or asking whether we think there is any *necessity* for their going? We all know that on such occasions not one is

absent that can possibly get there, and long before the hour appointed all are in waiting. And why? Because they enjoy it so much. Then is it not plain that people would not require to be driven to the Lord's Table if they did but *enjoy* it? Oh! how can we think or speak enough of the great blessedness of feeding upon Jesus Christ? Only let us consider what it is to be brought so near to Him, and to have Him come so near to us. Shall we ask, "Do you mean that I *must* come?" Are we not more disposed to inquire, "Do you think that I *may* come? I should value it so very highly if I might have it."

Now here I must make mention of some of the reasons which hinder many persons from coming. Some persons really feel a difficulty about it. I shall be very glad to try and help them out of their difficulty; and they will be

strength, then our bodies receive from it bitterness and strength at the same time. And God employs the sign of meat and drink for this Sacrament, to teach us that He does the very same thing for our souls by this Sacrament, which He does continually for our bodies by our daily food. Now Christ has all good things in Himself. When we feed upon Him, therefore, we can have all good things, any one and every one which we wish for. If we wish that we knew God better, and that we were more wise about our salvation; or that we were more gentle, or more patient, or more loving, to each other, or more honest; or that we took more care about our words—we can have all this through the Sacrament, for Christ has all these things. He has *all* knowledge, *all* wisdom, gentleness, patience, love, and everything besides. So that, by taking Him in this Sacrament, we

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In the same way, in this Holy Sacrament we have Christ given us to nourish and strengthen our souls, to make us able to overcome the temptations to sin which Satan brings before us, to make



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persons will not do this? If you will but take proper pains, you need not be afraid of becoming like them. God's gifts do not make persons wicked, unless they will obstinately make a bad use of them.

But remember, you are not safe by staying away. Our Lord's command, and His plain warning, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man—ye have no life in you," make it plain that you are in the greatest danger by keeping away from it. If you were to eat too much, or too fast, or unwholesome food, you would be ill: shall you do well then not to eat at all? You know that if you come to the Sacrament and go away from it in a bad way, it will hurt you; you cannot bear to see other people do so, therefore you say, "I will not go at all." Is not that very foolish?

But a *third* reason, which persons *very very* constantly plead, is—"I do

not think I am fit to come." My dear friend, let me ask you, is this a real difficulty with you, or is it only an excuse? If you feel it to be a difficulty which you wish to get over, what are you doing to become more fit? Are you praying earnestly to God to make you fit? Are you inquiring of your Minister and other good friends what is wanted to make you fit? and are you doing what they advise you?

But let me ask you further, what do you mean by being fit? There are some persons who imagine that they must become perfectly good, and be quite sure never to do a wrong thing again, before they can be fit to come to this Sacrament. Now this is a very great mistake; we can never be so holy as to do no more sin: if we imagine so to ourselves, it is a mistake, and a piece of self-deceit. We should earnestly set ourselves against sin, determine by

God's help never *willingly* to do wrong, and to strive against it, and then come to this Sacrament, and this will help us, and will make us better. So that coming to the Sacrament properly, is really the way for us to grow more fit to come. Persons often speak, I think, as if they had a very great misunderstanding, not only of this Sacrament, but of the whole way to eternal life. They seem to think that they must make themselves good, fit for Heaven, and then pray and come to Holy Communion. There could not be a greater or more serious mistake. It is, to use a common proverb, putting the cart before the horse; or, using a comparison which is often made, to get well first, and then send for the doctor; to put away your hunger, and then eat your dinner; to get rested, and then lie down. We *cannot* make ourselves good. From the beginning to the end

the whole work is God's. If we feel inclined to do right, it is God Who makes us so inclined; and if we are able to do right, it is God Who makes us able. So that if we wish to be inclined to do right, or to do it when we are inclined, we must look to God to help and enable us. Therefore we should pray to Him, and come to the Sacrament, that we may receive His help, which He will give us then.

If we look at the matter strictly, in one sense not a single person is fit to come to this Sacrament. The very holiest and best men and women that ever were—St. John for example, and the Blessed Virgin Mary—are not worthy in themselves to “take and eat” the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ, “both God and man.” But what is meant by our being fit to come is, that we are earnestly desiring to be holier in our living, and looking to God to

make us holier by His Son Jesus Christ, Whom He gives us in this Sacrament.

*Fourthly.* Persons not unfrequently go a little further than this, and say they dare not come for fear they shall "eat and drink their own damnation." They have heard St. Paul's words to the Corinthians, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself;" and they take it for granted that if they come to this Sacrament, they shall do this. Now I should like to ask such persons two questions. Have you any real notion what these words mean? Probably you have not any; you only imagine that they mean something very dreadful, perhaps that you will be all the more likely to go to hell than you would be without this Sacrament. Then I would ask you further, Have you tried to find out what they mean? Have you ever asked your minister to

explain them to you, and to tell you what you ought to do? If you have not done this, do you not think that you are very much to blame for not doing it? Let me then now, in as few words as I can, explain this difficult passage.

I can hardly doubt that St. Paul meant to say that those persons who do eat and drink the Sacrament *unworthily*, do really get a great deal of harm to themselves by it, and bring themselves nearer to hell, instead of being lifted up towards Heaven. All depends then on what he means by "eating and drinking unworthily." You will observe that he does not say "he that is not worthy to eat and drink," but "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily," or, as we should say, improperly, in an unbecoming, improper way. He particularly referred to some very strange and bad practices



which the Corinthians were guilty of. The rich people who came to the Sacrament, used to bring meat and drink for the poor, that all the Christians might have a Feast together at the time. Some of the bread and wine which was brought for the Feast, was taken and blessed for the Sacrament. Some careless and ungodly people, made no difference between that part which had been blessed for the Sacrament, and that which had not been blessed; or, in St. Paul's words, they did "not discern the Lord's Body," they did not distinguish the Bread and Wine which had been consecrated to be "the Lord's Body" and Blood from the rest, which was common bread and wine. So they despised the Sacrament; they counted it as nothing particular—the same thing, I may say, as eating their ordinary dinner. And then they ate and drank too much at the Feast, and turned it into a drunken

revel, instead of a holy, solemn entertainment.\* This was a most frightful mockery of God's Holy Ordinance; no wonder that St. Paul should warn them that by committing this dreadful sin they sank themselves nearer to hell, that indeed they turned "the Bread of Life" into a deadly poison. Now though Christians now-a-days are not likely to do exactly this same thing, yet they too may eat and drink unworthily. Suppose a person thinks that the Bread and Wine, when it is blessed and given to him in the Sacrament, is no more than any other bread and wine, that it will do him no good and no harm, and so, that he need not take any great care about It—that person

\* This Feast has now been done away with; and now persons give money instead of meat and drink at the Sacrament. The collection which is always made at the Holy Communion in Church is generally for the benefit of the poor.

would eat it unworthily; he would not discern or see "the Lord's Body."

Or if a person comes to this Sacrament because he thinks he is good enough, and not feeling he is a great sinner, and needs the Precious Blood of his dear Saviour to take away his sin—then he would eat unworthily; he does not value that Precious Body and Blood of the Lord which are given us therein.

Or if he comes without a full and earnest determination to leave off his sins, so that he does not so much mind if he does the same wicked things afterwards that he has done before; if he means to go on drinking, swearing, lying, slandering, cheating, neglecting his prayers, and so forth—then he eats unworthily. Christ gave His Body and Blood to save us from these things, not to encourage us in them. Or if he has a quarrel with a neighbour, and

will not make it up; if he has some grudge against a neighbour, and will not put it away, or goes about speaking harm of any one, and will not try to keep his tongue in order—then he eats unworthily: “First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”\*

If you wish to know, then, what it is to eat and drink this Sacrament unworthily, you may learn from these few remarks. If you do not wish and mean to do these wicked things, you need not be afraid of “eating and drinking damnation to yourself.”

These two last objections seem to arise out of a mistake which persons very commonly fall into about Holy Communion. They think it is a very excellent thing, which all persons ought to receive before they die; but it is a kind of spiritual luxury, a religious

\* St. Matt. v. 24.

dainty, which none but the very best are to dare to touch. This Blessed Sacrament is for all those who feel their sins, and desire to be delivered from them through Jesus Christ. Christ invites all to "come unto" Him, that He may take off the load of their sins, and give them "rest." The holiest persons have a great load of sins, as well as the rest of us who are not so holy. All are sinners; and as sinners, are to come here to put away our sins and wash our robes "white in the Blood of the Lamb." \* Those who come to this Sacrament, are wandering sheep on their way back to the fold; prodigal sons that were dead and are coming to life again; poor souls starving of hunger and thirst, who come for food and drink; souls sick all over "from the sole of the foot to the crown of

\* Rev. vii. 14.

the head," \* who come to the Physician to be healed. The fitness which we need is, to feel that we are unfit and cannot do without Jesus Christ to make us fit.

*Fifthly.* Many persons, mothers especially, make their children an excuse for not coming to this Sacrament. They say their children are fretful, and troublesome, and provoking, and that this often makes the parent uneasy, and cross, and out of temper. Does not God give you your children? Does not He know that they are fretful and sometimes disobedient, as all children are? Does not He send them as your especial trial, that you may learn to bear their tempers and tiresome ways without doing wrong, and trust Him? Does He not say to you, though you have these children, "Come unto Me," "Do this in remembrance of

\* Isaiah, i. 6.

Me?" If you mean to be cross, and sharp, and pettish with the children, then you are wrong and commit sin, whether you come to this Sacrament or stay away; but you should determine by God's grace to be patient with them, and come to the Sacrament that you may obtain His strength to bring them up well for Him, without giving way to bad temper or using bad words.

These, I think, are the principal difficulties which persons feel about coming to this Sacrament. One answer may be made to them all. "I must go to It, because my Saviour has commanded me, and has told me it is necessary, therefore I must get over the difficulties in some way."

I think I have now explained in some degree the nature of this Sacrament, what It is; I have shown some *of the* chief benefits which It is in-

tended to convey to us; and I have pointed out the duty of receiving It, striving to sweep away some of the excuses which are often urged for not coming.

What remains for me to do but to urge upon you, in the strongest but most affectionate manner, to think very seriously about the matter *at once*, and to come to receive it without loss of time? every week that you put it off, you are both breaking Christ's command, and going on without life in your souls, for so He has said. (*John*, vi. 53.) He calls you with His own voice; He knocks at your door, offering to "come in and sup with" you, and that you should sup with Him. (*Rev.* iii. 20.) You feel that a person ought to receive It before he dies. But why at his death more than now? If he is not fit now, would the approach of death make him fit? As you live, so you



will die. This Sacrament taken on your death-bed will not make up for a life of neglect. Live while you live; do not be content with "a name to live," while you are dead. Perhaps you feel that if you come to this Sacrament you must give up some habits and practices, which you cannot make up your mind to lay aside; or you must give some time to preparation, and you do not like to spare any. Oh! but, my dear friends, think what an awful thing you are refusing; think how dreadful it is to refuse the Body and Blood of Christ Jesus! Can you really say, when He gave It freely for you on the Cross, and gives It freely to you now, "I pray Thee have me excused" from taking it? Can you make up your mind to allow Him to make such an offer to you, and yet reject the offer? Do you think that you will venture to plead your present excuses before His

judgment-seat, when He asks you why you did not come to His Feast? "Every mouth shall be stopped," like the mouth of the man who "had not on a wedding garment," who "was speechless."

But on the other hand, do not think that because you are commanded to come, therefore you may come, so to speak, anyhow. St. Paul says that ungodly communicants "are guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord," and "eat and drink their own damnation." If these persons do not heartily prepare for It beforehand, and, as the Psalm says, "wash their hands in innocency,"\* if they come in sin, and meaning to continue in it, they only bring upon themselves worse destruction. They are not safe if they stay away; they are quite certain to go to hell if they keep on in their wickedness, whether

\* Psalm xxvi. 6.

they come to this Sacrament or stay away; but if they come, their punishment is all the more certain and more severe. The *only* thing to be done is to come, and to prepare carefully that we may receive It worthily and properly.

Let no humble Christian be discouraged because it is so great a thing. It is true that he comes to meet his Maker; but let him remember that this same Maker is likewise his Saviour, Who gave His Life for him.

“ It is my Maker—dare I stay ?  
My Saviour—dare I turn away ? ”

This Saviour calls and intreats you to come. He would not do this if He meant to be angry with you, or punish you for coming. If you feel that you have sinned deeply, come to receive pardon through His Blood. If you feel that you sin continually, come to

receive strength to overcome sin. If you feel that you have difficulties, and hardly know what to do, come to be taught by Him what you should do, and to be enabled by Him to do it aright. If you are in any trouble of any kind; if any one has done you wrong, spoken unkindly of you, or brought false charges against you or your friends; if your children have behaved ill; if you have been provoked by some unjust treatment; if you have been flurried and worried by having much business to do, or by some great loss; do not stay away from the Sacrament on this account. But come all the more, bring your trouble there, and tell it all out to God, beg Him to relieve you of it, and to forgive you for any wrong you may have done respecting it.

I shall, as I said before, give you some simple directions about preparation for

this Sacrament in the other part of this little book, together with some advice what to do during the service and afterwards. In the mean time, let me beg you not to lay aside, or pass over, what you have read here; but remember that Jesus Christ invites you to this Sacrament as the means of your obtaining eternal life; it is the porch to Heaven, the gate into the Eternal City, for what you receive in It is Jesus Christ Himself. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst." "Will ye also go away?" \*

\* St. Matt. xi. 28; Rev. xxii. 17; St. John, vi. 35, 67.

## PART II.

### THE COMMUNICANT.

*Directions how to prepare for this Sacrament.*

It is a great and solemn work which I have undertaken, to try to help persons prepare for Holy Communion; it is a work which belongs especially to God Himself, and therefore I earnestly beseech Him to guide me to say what is right, and to make it useful to many who read it. I beg you, my friends, who take up this book, to pray with me, that God will make what is written in it profitable both to you and myself.

The object of this part of the book is not to explain the nature of the Lord's Supper, nor to exhort persons to come to It, but to show those who are coming how they may get ready to come with most advantage. It is the greatest

privilege which is permitted to us in this world—the greatest of those great gifts which God showers upon us in such rich abundance in His Church, to prepare us for Heaven. And like all God's gifts, whether for the soul or the body, It may be of the greatest advantage to us, or It may do us infinite mischief; if used aright, It is the greatest blessing; if used amiss, It brings a curse. "As the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy Sacrament—so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily."\* Our business, therefore, is to take the greatest care that we receive It worthily.

Before I proceed further, I wish just to draw your attention to St. Paul's expression, which so often keeps persons away from Holy Communion: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily,

\* Exhortation in Communion Service.

*"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily."* 41

eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." I have said a good deal about this in the former part of this book; but here I wish you just to observe that St. Paul does not say, "He that is not worthy to eat and drink," but, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily," improperly, in an unfit and unsuitable manner. Persons often seem to think that the two things are the same; but we may be very unfit to do a work, and yet may do it very properly as far as we can. A servant may be very unfit for his place, but he may take great pains, and do his work as well as he can, and so we may say he does it properly. If a nobleman were to ask one of you poor persons to dine with him at his table, you might feel that you were very unfit to sit down with him, you would not know how to behave, and your clothes would not suit with his handsome furniture. Perhaps you



might tell him this, and say that you hardly thought it right for you to go. He probably would answer, that that was not your concern but his. If he chose to have you to dine with him, all you had to do was to go, and behave as well as you knew how, and he would be satisfied. If you went and conducted yourself as well as you could, you would be doing it properly, though you might feel all the while that you were not a proper guest for a nobleman. But if you did not try to behave yourself well, you would not be dining properly. God is much greater than any nobleman, and He asks you to come and sup with Him. Neither you nor I are fit to be at His Table; but if we come as well as we can, wishing we could be a great deal better, we shall come worthily. We are to take pains to get ready beforehand, that we may do it as well as we can.

I shall divide what I have to say under four heads.

*I. I shall show you how to prepare for First Communion.*

*II. How to prepare on future occasions.*

*III. How to behave during the Service.*

*IV. How to make the most of it afterwards.*

I. My dear friends, I need hardly say to you, that you are coming to the greatest event in your life since your Baptism. You were then made the Child of God, and were joined to Jesus Christ. Since that time you have perhaps grown up, and may have seen many important changes; you have been to service, perhaps into several different places; you have been confirmed; you may have married, and may have had children born; greater things even than these may have be-

fallen you; but all these are little in comparison with what now awaits you. Our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ is coming afresh, to take up His dwelling in you, and to take you to live in Him. He is now knocking at the door of your heart; and when you come to this Sacrament in a proper manner, then you open the door to Him. He will then come in, and sup with you and you with Him. You will not be by yourself in future; He will be in you wherever you are and whatever you are doing. Oh! how great a thing! surely it ought to take up all your thoughts beforehand, that you may not, by any carelessness or misconduct, forfeit the blessing, but may make as sure of it as you can.

St. Paul tells us plainly how we are all to prepare for coming to the Sacrament. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of That Bread, and

drink of That Cup.”\* If then I am to teach you how to prepare yourself, I really have to teach you how to examine yourself.

There are different ways of examining anything; we may examine it thoroughly, looking into every part and trying it in all ways, as we do when we really wish to know what the thing is; or we may only make believe to examine it, just looking on it without any great care, as persons do when they do not care what the thing is, or when they are afraid to find it bad, or when they have made up their minds to be satisfied with it. You see two different persons examine a house: one will go into every room, into every nook and corner, climb up into the roof, take notice of the walls and floors and fastenings, ask all manner of questions respecting it. He is thinking of

\* 1 Cor. xi. 28.

taking the house, but is desirous of having one to suit him, so he really wishes to know about it. Or it is his own house, newly-built, that he wishes to be complete before he goes to live in it. The other just runs through the chief rooms, gives one look round the outside, and says very little. Perhaps he is afraid of the expense of repairing it, or he has made up his mind to take it, and does not wish to see its faults ; for he cannot take the trouble to look more closely into it.

In like manner, there are two ways of examining ourselves. We may just ask ourselves a few questions from a book, and not wait to give any real answer to them, or make up our mind beforehand to give a good answer. This is of no use at all, it does more harm than good. It is what the Prayer Book calls being "dissemblers with God," pretending to do it, and leaving

it undone all the time. Or we may take great pains to think over what we have said and done, and try to remember why we said and did it. We may compare our conduct at one time with what we did some time before. We may try to see whether we really do come up to what God requires or not. This is real self-examination, doing it in earnest, "so that we may come holy and clean to such a Heavenly Feast," as the Prayer Book says. The Catechism teaches us that there are *four* points about which persons are to examine themselves, before coming to Holy Communion. 1. "Whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life." 2. "Have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ." 3. "With a thankful remembrance of His death." 4. "And be in charity with all men." This is to be done every time, as well

as the first ; but the first time it requires particular attention, and will probably take a longer time. Let us consider each of these four points separately.

1. REPENTANCE.—You are to inquire whether you repent truly of your past sins, and are resolutely determined to live better for the time to come. You must therefore look back over the years you have spent already, and try to call to mind the wrong things you have done. Look at the time when you were at school, or when you left school for service ; see what happened when you first went to place, and why you left it. Think of any faults you have done since, any things you would be ashamed to tell another person of, anything you would not like to be known that you had done. They may have been done some years ago, or quite lately ; you may have been punished

for them, or perhaps, no one ever suspects you of doing them. Do not try to hide them, or forget them, or make excuses for them; but inquire of yourself, "Am I really sorry for having done this? I do not like to think of it; is that because of the punishment or disgrace which it brought on me, or because I really cannot bear the wicked thing? Should I be glad to do it again? Do I wish that I could feel obliged to do it? or that the temptation might be so strong that I might give way to it? Do I wish that it were right to do it? Or do I try to hate it because it is wrong? Do I wish to keep out of its way? Am I afraid of doing it again? Do I mean, whatever it may cost me, to do my very best not to fall into it again?" Then inquire further, "Is there any wrong thing that I am likely to be tempted to do?" You may see how many young men before you have



gone on steadily for a time, and bye and bye have taken to drinking or swearing; and how many young women like you have done well at service for a year or two, and then taken to gossiping with idle lads, or to thieving, or to carelessness. You may reasonably fear for yourself, that you shall be tempted to do the same. Ask yourself, "Am I determined, if God will help me, not to go into these wicked ways? Do I feel that this would be much worse for me than losing a good place, or being very ill?"

2. FAITH.—You are to inquire whether you have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ. Do I believe that I deserve that God should be angry with me because of my sins? Do I believe that instead of being angry with me, He poured out His anger upon Jesus Christ, and so feels kindly and tenderly towards me for

His sake? Do I believe that though I have been so very wicked, yet God is quite ready to forgive me everything, and still to love me and take me to Heaven? Do I believe that all this mercy comes to me only because of what Jesus Christ willingly suffered for me on the Cross? Do I ever think that I must get good enough for God to forgive me, or do I believe that He will forgive me for being wicked, and make me better? Do I feel how unspeakable is God's love to me, when I am so utterly unworthy of it? Do I love Him for His love to me? Do I try to please Him in return for His kindness?

3. A THANKFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIS DEATH.—You are here to inquire whether you do often remember and think of His dying for you. Probably you will feel that though you do sometimes think of Him, yet it is generally only when you read the Bible, or say

your prayers, or go to church. But when you do think of what He has done for you, does it make you feel very grateful to Him? Do you see what you would have been without it? Do you feel how great, great beyond all things, is the relief "from the bitter pains of eternal death," to the hope of eternal glory? Do you feel that you can never be thankful enough to Him for having delivered you? Do you try to remember it often, and try to praise Him for having borne so much for you?

. Now here it may be well to remind you, that if anything is very near to our hearts, that is, if we feel very much interested in it, it will be much in our thoughts. If we are really impressed with the great love of Christ, and the very great benefits which we derive through His death, these things will be continually coming up into our minds. We shall think of them naturally, as

we lie in bed, as we go about our work, at our meals, when we are alone, and in company. If Christ's love be really *the* great thing which we prize above all things, we shall be sure to think about it always. If you find that you do not think much about it, you may be quite sure that you have still a great deal to learn respecting its greatness, and its great value. Ask yourself, "Do I try to thank Him for His love?"

4. CHARITY.—This is a very very important matter for you to examine your conscience upon. Our Lord gives us such a very particular direction about this in His Sermon on the Mount, that we cannot help seeing how much importance He attached to it.\* Ask yourself, "Has anybody done me any

\* Matt. v. 23, 24.—"If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

wrong? Has anybody that I know of said anything against me, told any lie about me, or done me any mischief? Do I freely and perfectly forgive him? Am I willing to hope he is sorry for it? Should I be ready to do him a kindness? Do I try not to speak or to think of his unkind behaviour? Have I tried to make it up with him?" Perhaps he may not be willing to own his fault, or to make it up with you. Nevertheless, you must be desirous to make it up with him.

Again ask, "Have I done wrong to any persons, by speaking falsely of them, by telling their faults when I need not have told them, by cheating them, or being passionate with them, or doing them any unkindness? Am I really sorry for it? Have I owned it to them, and begged their pardon? Am I ready to beg their pardon, and to make it up with them? Have I done my best to

make up to them any loss I may have caused them, by cheating, stealing, neglecting their work, running in their debt, and so forth? Am I really trying, with all my might, to do to others just the same that I should wish them to do to me? What am I doing for the good of my fellow-creatures? Do I ever sacrifice my own pleasure, or comfort, or my own will, for their sake? Do I pray for the wicked, and try to make them better? Do I try to be gentle and kind to those who are impatient and tiresome? Do I try to love all men, as my dear Saviour has loved me and all mankind?" \*

I earnestly entreat you to make some such strict examination of yourself, and be honest and careful in making true answers. Remember that we are not the better for merely asking ourselves questions, but for learning what we

\* St. John, xiii. 34 ; xv. 13.

really are, when we have been and are going wrong, that we may repent, and, by God's grace, do better for the time to come.

Now suppose, that when you have gone through this self-examination, you feel in yourself, "I am not good enough, I cannot say that I do and feel all these good things ; I see that I have been doing very wrong, and I am afraid that I shall never do as I ought to do." That is just what we should wish you and every one else to feel. Now ask yourself further, "Do I really wish that I were better, and do I mean to try and do better?" If you feel that you can say "yes" to this question, then come to Holy Communion ; kneel down first, and confess to God all the wrong things which these questions have shewn to you that you do and feel, pray Him for Jesus Christ's sake to forgive you, and to give you grace

to forsake them; then make up your mind to come at once to the Sacrament, and you will come worthily.

But suppose you feel that there is some one wrong thing you cannot wish or try to give up; then think what you are doing by nourishing that sin, like a poisonous serpent in your breast, and throwing away everlasting life for its sake. O! pray of God with all your heart to give you grace to give up this sin, and everything else, for Him, that so you may be a worthy communicant, and may obtain eternal life.

If you cannot feel satisfied whether you ought to come or not, do not make up your mind that it is best to stay away, but go to some clergyman, as the Prayer Book recommends you, and ask him; or, if you cannot do this, then come to the Sacrament, and pray God not to be angry with you, but to make you more fit to come.




*Prayer after Self-examination.*

**O** Almighty God and Father, I confess to Thee that I am a great sinner, and have done many wicked things, particularly [*mention what things you remember.*] But I beseech Thee, have mercy upon me; for Thy dear Son's sake, forgive me all my sins; I heartily desire to forsake them all, and to be truly sorry for them. Do Thou help me; receive me at Thy holy altar, though I am unworthy to come to it; but I pray Thee to make me more worthy, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Prayer, which may be said by all persons every day while they are preparing for Holy Communion.*

**O** Lord Jesus Christ, Who dost graciously invite me to the Blessed Sacrament of Thy Body and Blood; fit and prepare me, that I may receive it worthily; Grant that I may be drawn



thither by love to Thee, rather than kept back by fear. Enable me faithfully to examine myself; and do Thou shew me what is within my heart. Give me deep repentance, a lively faith, and a true love to my neighbours; that so coming to Thine Altar with a humble remembrance of Thy Death, I may truly partake of Thy Blessed Body and Blood, and of all the benefits which Thou by Thy Death hast purchased for me; Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end. *Amen.*

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- II. The directions which I have given hitherto are intended more particularly for those who are preparing for First Communion, though they may be found more or less useful for others, even for those who have been long in the habit of coming to Communion. But I am now about to give

some special directions to those who are coming *not* for the first time.

The same general command of St. Paul applies to you, "Let a man examine himself." I shall for your assistance put down a number of questions, which you should from time to time ask yourselves, that you may see where you still do wrong, and where you have need to do better. But besides these questions, every chapter you read in the Bible, every sermon you hear, and every book you take up, will furnish you with a great many questions for self-examination, if you really are wishing to know what is the true state of your soul, that you may improve it.

1. I advise you to set apart a certain time before every Communion, to prepare for it. Some persons may be able to take a part of every day the week *before*; some may take part of the

Sunday evening before, and perhaps of two or three days only in the week besides; others may not be able to give more than part of one day, perhaps the very evening before. Only be careful to take *some* time, and do not make it shorter than you are obliged. If you are ever so busy, take this little time, even if you are obliged to lose some of your sleep for it. Put away for the time all thoughts of your work, or your business, or your children, and so forth; and, as it were, go into the Presence of God, to get your soul dressed for the Sunday's Feast.

But if it should so happen that you are unexpectedly called to the Sacrament, either finding it at church when you did not know of it, or being asked to receive it with a sick person, do not be alarmed or stay away because you have not gone through your preparation. But come humbly, and say *some*

such prayer as this: "O Almighty God, Thou hast invited me to Thy blessed Sacrament, and I have not been able to prepare myself as I would. Thou knowest the desires of my heart, that I wish to be more fit to come before Thee; have mercy on me, and accept and bless me, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

2. Begin your preparation by trying to remember how you have acted since the last time you received the Sacrament. Inquire of yourself whether you repent truly of the sins you have committed since then. If you are sincere in this inquiry, you will probably find that, with all your good wishes and resolutions, you have a great many things to confess and be sorry for. One of the best things to do to help you in curing evil habits, is to take one of them at a time, and try to overcome that, watching against it every day,

and asking yourself every night whether you have given way to it. When you are preparing for this Sacrament, think particularly about this habit that you are trying to correct, and see how many times since your last Communion you have given way to it. Try and call back to your mind, as distinctly as you can, the times and the circumstances when you gave way, so that you may fall down on your knees, and own to your Heavenly Father that you have done this so many times, and in such a very bad way, and that you are heartily sorry for it.

I must repeat here, what I have said elsewhere, that you should remember you are not to try to find out that you do not do wrong, but to learn where you do wrong, that you may be forgiven and may do better. It is quite certain that you do wrong, and no one knows that so well as Almighty God;

and He is ready beforehand to have pity and to forgive you, and also to help you to begin again to amend yourself.

But, besides inquiring about this particular fault, ask yourself some of the questions which you will find in this book. Do not deceive yourself by giving good answers when your conscience whispers that you have done wrong. But set yourself, instead, to beg more earnestly of God for grace to do much better for the future. Be very particular to inquire, "Am I really sorry for having done this wrong? Am I determined, with God's help, to try and not do it again? I know it will cost me a great effort, and perhaps a great deal of trouble, and ridicule, and hardship. Am I determined to brave all this that I may leave off this sin?"

Be particular in trying to find out

how you act and how you feel towards your fellow-creatures, your master and mistress, your children, your parents, your brothers and sisters, your fellow-servants, those who are put under you, those who live near you, your customers, your tradesmen. Examine how you feel towards those who seem to have done you wrong, and whether you have done your best to make up to those whom you may have offended, either on purpose or without meaning it.

3. Inquire very carefully what are your real hopes of salvation. It is a matter about which you are very likely to deceive yourself. You *know* that Jesus Christ is our only Saviour, and therefore you suppose that you are really trusting to Him for your salvation. Inquire, "Do I really feel that I am nothing at all in God's sight but a miserable sinner, and must be cast away by Him except for His love in



sending Jesus Christ to die for me? or do I think at all that I am tolerably fit to go to Heaven, and that I need not be so much afraid as many persons ought to be? Do I think that this Sacrament will take away my sins, and make me good enough, if only I can get good enough to take the Sacrament?" Beware of all these mistakes; for, if you do these things, you are really trusting to yourself, to your own goodness, or to this Sacrament, instead of to Jesus Christ. Ask yourself, "When I think of dying and standing before Christ to be judged, what is it which gives me hope? is it that Christ has died and taken away my sins? Do I feel that He alone it is for Whose sake God at all times can love me and be kind to me? When I have done wrong, do I go immediately and beg God to forgive me, because Jesus Christ was punished for me?"

4. 'Every day in the week before coming to Holy Communion, say the two prayers which are given in page 58, and say also the following prayer.

**O** HEAVENLY Father, grant that every time I come to Holy Communion I may be drawn nearer to Thee, and may give up myself more entirely to Thee and to Thy service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

I add a beautiful little hymn, which you can say at the same time, or in church at the time of the Sacrament.

O God, unseen yet ever near,  
Thy presence may we feel ;  
And thus inspir'd with holy fear,  
Before Thine Altar kneel.

Here may Thy faithful people know  
The blessings of Thy love,  
The Streams that through the desert flow,  
The Manna from above.

We come, obedient to Thy word,  
To feast on heav'nly Food ;

Our meat, the Body of the Lord ;  
Our drink, His precious Blood.

Thus may we all Thy words obey,  
For we, O God, are Thine ;  
And go rejoicing on our way,  
Renew'd with strength divine.

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
The God Whom we adore,  
Be glory ; as it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore. Amen.

If you use these means carefully, faithfully, with an earnest desire to be benefited, I think you will certainly find yourself in a better state of mind to come to Holy Communion, and consequently will be the more benefited by coming.\*

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III. I will now try to offer a few suggestions for your behaviour at the time of receiving this Sacrament.

It is well to be particular on a Communion Day, not to be late in getting

\* Turn to the Appendix, page 121.

up, so that you may not be hurried in anything. It is well, also, to be particular to be in church that day quite in time, and to make a rule not to look about you at all, as other persons are coming in. Pay very great attention to the whole of the Morning Service, the Prayers, Lessons, Singing, and Sermon.

While the rest of the congregation are going out of church, try to collect your thoughts, and fix them upon the very solemn service that is about to follow. Think especially of your blessed Saviour hanging on the Cross for you, and loving you as He hung there. Think of your own sins, and how unworthy you are to come near to Him. If there is time before the Service begins, kneel down and say the following prayer :—

**O** GRACIOUS Lord Jesus Christ, I,  
Thy sinful servant trusting in Thy

mercy, with fear and trembling approach Thy most sweet Feast. For my heart and body are defiled with many sins, my mind and tongue have not been faithfully guarded. Look down on me with the eyes of Thy mercy, O Lord Jesus Christ, God and Man, crucified for man! Hear me, who hope in Thee; have pity on me, who am full of miseries and sins. Remember Thy creature, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood. Come down to sanctify us who kneel before Thee. Make Thyself known to our souls in this Sacrament. By Thine Own self take from me all mine iniquities and sins, that I may worthily taste Thy Sacred Body and Blood; and be Thou to me the food of my soul, and make me hunger and thirst for Thee more and more, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end. *Amen.*

When the collection is made, whether before the non-Communicants leave, or afterwards, give what you are able, what you think you ought to give to God for the poor whom He cares for, in return for the great things He gives you. But if you really have nothing to give, come all the same. God knows how poor you are. He accepts your good will instead of money. As you put your money into the plate, say, "Lord, all things come of Thee; I give this back to Thee out of that which Thou hast given me."

After the collection has been placed on the Lord's Table, and the bread and wine, which is to be consecrated, has also been placed there in readiness, the clergyman says,

*Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church,  
militant here on earth.*

**A**LMIGHTY and everlasting God, Who by Thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks,

for all men; we humbly beseech Thee most mercifully to accept our alms and oblations, and to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto Thy Divine Majesty; beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all they that do confess Thy holy Name, may agree in the truth of Thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech Thee also to save and defend all Christian kings, princes, and governors, and especially Thy servant Victoria, our Queen: that under her we may be godly and quietly governed: and grant unto her whole council, and to all that are put in authority under her, that they may truly and indifferently minister justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of Thy true religion, and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and curates, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth Thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer Thy holy Sacraments. And to all Thy people give Thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that with meek heart, and due reverence, they may hear and receive Thy holy Word; truly serving Thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech Thee

*The Prayer for the Church Militant.* 73

of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless Thy holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear; beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Whilst this is being said,\* try to pray for any friends of your own who are in trouble; and thank God at the end for any friends and relations of yours who are dead, and who you hope are gone to Him.

Pay all the attention you can to the two addresses which the clergyman will then read.

**D**EARLY beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come to the holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider

\* If this Prayer is said before the non-Communicants leave, then say the prayer at page 69, beginning, "O Gracious Lord," in this place, while they are going out.



how Saint Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy Sacrament; (for then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us;) so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. For then we are guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's Body; we kindle God's wrath against us; we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death. Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent you truly for your sins past; have a lively and stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men; so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries. And above all things ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the Death and Passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and Man, who did humble Himself, even to the death upon the Cross, for us, miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of

death ; that He might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should alway remember the exceeding great love of our Master, and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious Blood-shedding He hath obtained to us ; He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His Death, to our great and endless comfort. To Him therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks ; submitting ourselves wholly to His holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve Him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. *Amen.*

**Y**E that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways : Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort ; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.

*A General Confession, to be said by all,  
kneeling.*

Say every word of it distinctly, but not too loud, and with all your heart.

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of Thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

After this, the Priest will pronounce the Absolution.

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, who of His great mercy hath promised forgive-

ness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him : Have mercy upon you ; pardon and deliver you from all your sins ; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness ; and bring you to everlasting life ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

As he concludes it, you may say,  
“Do this for me, O Lord, for Christ’s sake.” *Amen.*

*Then shall the Priest say,*

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to Him :

“Come unto me, all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.” St. Matt. xi. 28.

“So God loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” St. John, iii. 16.

Hear also what Saint Paul saith :

“This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” 1 Tim. i. 15.

Hear also what Saint John saith :

“If any man sin, we have an Advocate with

the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins." 1 St. John, ii. 1.

*After which the Priest proceeds:*

Lift up your hearts.

*Answer.* We lift them up unto the Lord.

*Priest.* Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

*Answer.* It is meet and right so to do.

*Then shall the Priest turn to the Lord's Table, and say,*

**I**T is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

*Here shall follow the Proper Preface, according to the time, if there be any specially appointed: or else immediately shall follow,*

**T**HEREFORE with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High. *Amen.*

## PROPER PREFACES.

*Upon Christmas Day, and seven days after.*

**B**ECAUSE Thou didst give Jesus Christ, Thine only Son, to be born as at this time for us ; Who by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary His Mother ; and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin.

“Therefore with Angels,” &c.

*Upon Easter Day, and seven days after.*

**B**UT chiefly are we bound to praise Thee for the glorious Resurrection of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; for He is the very Paschal Lamb, Which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world ; Who, by His death hath destroyed death, and by His rising to life again, hath restored to us everlasting life.

“Therefore with Angels,” &c.

*Upon Ascension Day, and seven days after.*

**T**HROUGH Thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; Who, after His most glorious Resurrection, manifestly appeared to all His Apostles, and in their sight ascended

up into heaven to prepare a place for us ; that where He is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with Him in glory.

“Therefore with Angels,” &c.

*Upon Whit-Sunday, and six days after.*

**T**HROUGH Jesus Christ our Lord ; according to Whose most true promise, the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the Apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth ; giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness, with fervent zeal constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations ; whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and true knowledge of Thee, and of Thy Son Jesus Christ.

“Therefore with Angels,” &c.

*Upon the Feast of Trinity only.*

**W**HO art one God, one Lord ; not one only Person, but three Persons in one substance. For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality.

“Therefore with Angels,” &c.

*After each of which Prefaces shall immediately be sung or said,*

“Therefore with Angels,” &c.

*Then shall the Priest, kneeling down at the Lord's Table, say in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion, this prayer following :*

**W**E do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord, Whose property is always to have mercy : Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His Blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. *Amen.*

Then follows that very very solemn part of the Service, called the Prayer of Consecration, in which the Priest blesses the bread and wine in Christ's name,



using the very words which He Himself used, when He first appointed the Sacrament. We should pay the greatest possible attention during this prayer, and think of Jesus Christ really coming to us to feed us with His Blessed Body and Blood.

**A**LMIGHTY GOD, our Heavenly Father, Who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; Who made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death, until His coming again: Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee; and grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His Death and Passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood: Who, in the same night that He was betrayed, *took Bread*; and, when He had given thanks, He

brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is My Body which is given for you; Do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise, after supper, He took the Cup; and, when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins: Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me. *Amen.*

*Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner, (if any be present,) and after that to the people also in order, into their hands, all meekly kneeling. And when he delivereth the Bread to any one, he shall say,*

THE Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

*And the Minister that delivereth the Cup to any one shall say,*

**T**HE Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

Whilst other persons are receiving, you will have at least a little time to yourself. Sometimes, when there are many persons, there will be a long time. Do not occupy yourself in looking at them, either before or after you yourself receive. The time will be very useful to you for two purposes.

1. *To pray.* This is a great time for prayer: to pray for all manner of things for yourself, for your soul and your body; for all persons in whom you are interested, particularly for your wife, husband, children, parents, brothers, sisters, other relations, friends, neighbours, for anybody who ever has wronged you, for your ministers, for *those* who live in the same parish, those

especially who are in the church at that time with you. Do not be afraid or ashamed to stay upon your knees as long as is necessary to say to your kind Father Who is in heaven all that you wish to say.

2. *To meditate.* When you have finished praying, take some verse or passage of Scripture and think it well over, try to understand it, to feel it, and to apply it to yourself. I have written some "Meditations" just beyond, to help you to do this.

When it comes to your turn to go up to the altar rails, go up very quietly, and with holy thoughts; and if you have gloves on, take them off. Kneel down humbly, and when the clergyman brings the Bread to you, and says the solemn words to you, say in your heart,

"Lord, let Thy Body preserve me now from sin, and save my soul and

my body for ever. Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

When he comes to you with the Cup, take it reverently, but firmly, into your hand, that there may be no danger of your letting it drop; and after he has said the solemn words, do you say in your heart,

"O Lord Jesus, wash away all my sins. I desire to live on Thee by faith; do Thou help me."

Then rise from your knees, and go back quietly to your seat; kneel down and pray to God to be with you and continue with you always.

**O** HEAVENLY Father, I am utterly unworthy of the great mercy Thou hast shown me; I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under the roof of my soul. I beseech Thee, look not upon my unworthiness, but pardon me and every one who has prepared his

heart to come before Thee, though we be still so unclean. Suffer me not to turn away from Thee and drive Thee from my heart; but do Thou dwell in me more and more. When I go back to my duties in the world, keep me from returning to the sins wherewith I have before offended Thee. But make me more and more to hunger and thirst after true righteousness, and gladly to suffer for Thy sake; through Jesus Christ our blessed Redeemer. *Amen.*

*If the consecrated Bread or Wine be all spent before all have communicated, the Priest is to consecrate more, according to the Form before prescribed, beginning at ["Our Saviour Christ in the same night," &c.] for the blessing of the Bread: and ["Likewise after supper," &c.] for the blessing of the Cup.*

*When all have communicated, the Minister shall return to the Lord's Table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth.*

*Then shall the Priest say the Lord's Prayer, the people repeating after him every Petition.*

**O**UR Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*After shall be said as follows.*

**O** LORD and heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants entirely desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee: humbly beseeching Thee, that all we, who are partakers of this holy Communion, may be fulfilled with Thy grace and

*Prayer after receiving, or Post-Communion. 89*

heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by Whom, and with Whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*

*Or this.*

**A**LMIGHTY and everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious Death and Passion of Thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with Thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as Thou hast



prepared for us to walk in ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

*Then shall be said or sung,*

**G**LORY be to God on high, and in earth peace, good will towards men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty

O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesu Christ ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy ; Thou only art the Lord ; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

*Then the Priest shall let them depart with this  
Blessing :*

**T**HE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the

knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

When the blessing has been given and the service is ended, do not be in a hurry to leave your place. Remain upon your knees for a short time, and say some such prayer as this :

**I** RENDER Thee hearty thanks, O gracious Father, for admitting me to approach so near unto Thee through Jesus Christ ; and I pray that this Holy Communion may not through my sins turn to my hurt, but that I may hereby be strengthened against all temptation, and be established and confirmed in all good things, through the same Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

## MEDITATIONS DURING HOLY COMMUNION.

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Luke, xxii. 19.—“*This do in remembrance of Me.*”

O loving Jesu, I desire with all humility and earnestness to remember Thee, Thy boundless love, Thy bitter sufferings, Thy loud cry on the Cross, Thy shameful death, and all for me, a wretched miserable sinner! It is this which makes my sin so very hateful—that it cost Thee all this suffering to take it away, and yet that I still sin against Thee notwithstanding. Oh! dear Lord, let the remembrance of Thee and of Thy love make me more willing and anxious to forsake all sin *for Thy sake.*

John, xv. 5.—“*I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing.*”

How exceeding great is the goodness of Jesus Christ, to join me to Himself, as the branch is joined to the vine! How can I ever bring forth good fruit enough to be fit to belong to such a tree? I cannot; it is only of His great love and mercy, to keep me growing out of Him, and to enable me to do good works. I desire to abide in Him; and for this purpose I will try to think of Him much more than I have ever done, at my work, at home, wherever I am, and whatever I am doing; and I will try to do what pleases Him. I will pray for His grace continually, for I feel that I cannot do one thing at all well, but by His grace enabling me;

and when it is done, all the credit and glory is not mine, but His.

Ps. xxvi. 6.—“*I will wash my hands in innocency; so will I compass Thine altar, O Lord.*”

I know well that clean hands here mean hands not polluted by sin, and a heart made clean by the Holy Ghost. Oh! I pray God not to be strict to mark all my sins and uncleanness; for I know too well that I am not as clean as I ought to be, and as I might be. How often my hands have sinned, if not by taking my neighbour's goods, or striking my neighbour, yet at least by remaining still in idleness, when I ought to have been doing him good; or by reaching out to take strong drink, or smart dress, which I had no business with. And how many unkind, jealous, envious, covetous, proud, angry thoughts have passed through my

mind, and were not sent out again at once. O gracious Lord, have mercy on me, as I come to Thine altar to-day.

Ps. lxxi. 3, 4.—“*Thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for: Thou art my hope, even from my youth.*”

Oh! how holy must the good man have been who could write these words. “*The thing that I long for.*” He must have learned to give up everything in the world that I have been used to care so much for—wife, children, work, money, business, my own way. When shall I ever be able to put these aside, and to long for only one thing, and that thing God Himself! I do desire to do this, and I do think that He has helped me to do it a little more than formerly; so that, perhaps, after all, if He will bear with me, and give me

more and more grace, I may by and bye be able to say with truth, "Thou, O Lord God, art *the thing* that I long for." If I ever do long for Him in this way, how I shall enjoy the Holy Communion, and what a blessed thing it will be to die and be for ever with Him! "O God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

Ps. cxxxix. 1-4.—"*O Lord, Thou hast searched me out, and known me; Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; Thou understandest my thoughts long before. Thou art about my path, and about my bed: and spiest out all my ways. For lo! there is not a word in my tongue, but Thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether.*"

If this be so, what must He think of me, and how dare I come to Him here! He knows all my idleness in sitting down when I ought to have been hard

at work, and my getting up to go with bad companions, or to waste my time in gaiety, when I should have been at my duties at home. He knows my secret motives, which I so carefully hid from others. He knows that I have been often praised for doing right, when the thing I did was wrong, because I meant wrong by doing it. He has seen me, as I have gone where I had no business to go, slyly, after some mischief, or away from church when I ought to have been there at this holy service. He has watched all my bad thoughts in bed, and seen how unwilling I have been to get up in the morning in time to pray to Him before going out. And what is almost worse than all, He has heard every word I have ever spoken, in anger, in falsehood, every indecent word, every oath, every foolish thing I have ever uttered. Oh! what a fearful thing! But yet



there is comfort. It is *He* who knows them; not one of my fellow-creatures, but He, my Heavenly Father, Who is full of compassion, and delights in mercy, and pities our weakness, and sent His Son to save us. O gracious Father, Thou knowest all; I cannot hide aught from Thee, nor do I desire to do so. I pray Thee forgive all, for Christ Jesu's sake.

John, vi. 56.—“*He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.*”

I believe that that which I receive here is Christ's Body and Blood. I cannot explain how that is, nor do I care to inquire. It is enough for me that He has said so. I desire from my heart to have such Heavenly food. What a wonderful and unspeakable gift to have Him dwell in me! How *holy all my thoughts* must be; how

holy all must be that I do, and how careful must I be of all that passes out of my lips! But if He dwells there, He will do this Himself, and will help me to become holy, as He is. O Lord, I pray Thee never to leave me.

John, xv. 12, 13.—“*This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*”

A commandment and an example : “As I have loved you.” I cannot lay down my life for other persons, but I am sure I do not love my neighbours as I ought. For instead of making sacrifices for them, to save their character, to relieve them of their sorrow, to help them in their difficulties, I am often finding fault with them, jealous of what is done for them, envious of the good things they do,

telling other people of their faults, making a great deal too much of the little injuries which they may sometimes have done me, running in their debt and not trying to pay them, borrowing their things and grumbling if they ask me to lend them mine; I have not loved others as He has loved me. And yet if He is so tender and so good as to draw me here to taste His love, I ought to try to be to others as unselfish as He was. Oh! blessed Jesu, do give me Thy grace, that I may love others with Thy Heavenly love, may forgive all their offences, make the best of all their misdoings, and find a real pleasure in doing them good for Thine own sake.

Psalm xxxiv. 8.—“*Oh! taste and see how gracious the Lord is.*”

Where shall I taste this so well as *in this Holy Sacrament*? For here is

Christ's Body given me to eat, Which He so graciously gave up for me on the Cross. He is so gracious to me, to preserve me alive in this way year after year, and month after month, while I may have opportunity to turn more completely away from my sins, and may learn the vastness of His love: so gracious to me, to bring me time after time to His altar to be forgiven: so gracious to me, not to let me sleep away into hell, but to remind me of my sins when I commit them, and still to assure me of His full and free pardon through His Blood: so gracious to me, to give me still the hope of inheriting eternal glory, when so many others will be cast away, only on account of His own graciousness. Oh! that I had not so hard and cold a heart, that I could taste and enjoy more the sweetness of His grace!

*Hymns that may be said at Holy Communion.*

SWEET the moments, rich in blessing,  
Which before the Cross I spend ;  
Life and health and peace possessing,  
From the sinner's dying Friend.  
Here I'll kneel, for ever viewing  
Mercy's streams in streams of Blood ;  
Precious Drops, my soul bedewing,  
Plead and claim my peace with God.

Truly blessed is this station,  
Low before His Cross to lie,  
While I see Divine compassion  
Floating in His languid Eye.  
Lord, in ceaseless contemplation  
Fix my heart and eyes on Thine,  
Till I taste Thy whole salvation,  
Where unveil'd Thy glories shine.

For Thy Sorrows I adore Thee—  
For the Griefs that wrought our peace—  
Gracious Saviour ! I implore Thee,  
In my heart Thy love increase.  
Unto Thee, the world's Salvation,  
Father, Spirit, unto Thee,  
Low I bow in adoration,  
Ever-blessed One and Three.

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Nor all the blood of beasts,  
On Jewish altars slain,  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,  
Takes all our sins away ;  
A Sacrifice of nobler name,  
And richer blood, than they.

My soul looks back to see  
The burdens Thou didst bear,  
When hanging on th' accursed tree,  
And hopes her guilt was there.

Believing, we rejoice  
To see the curse remove ;  
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,  
And sing His bleeding love.



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## QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

### *The Ten Commandments.*

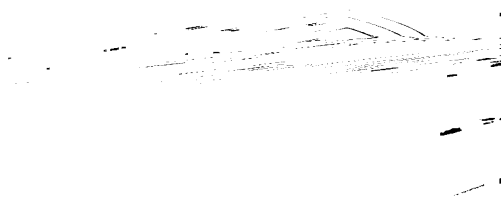
#### I.

Have I really loved God above all things ?

Do I love any of my children so that I do wrong in order to please him, or allow him to do wrong rather than correct him ?

Do I love myself so that I will please myself whether it be right or wrong ?

Do I really find a pleasure in what



might  
my  
ill-



concerns God? Am I often thinking about Him?

Do I wish to please Him, and think what I can do to please Him?

Am I really grieved in my heart when I remember that I have done something to displease Him? Do I go to Him and own it at once?

## II.

Do I *feel* that God appoints everything that happens to me, pleasant or unpleasant? and do I endeavour to think of Him in all which occurs?

Do I say my prayers, night and morning, without ever missing? and do I say them on my knees?

Do I enjoy my prayers, and other religious services? or am I in my heart glad when they are over, and I can go to other things?

Am I inattentive at Church?

*Have* I been afraid of what people

might say to me, or of me? and so left my duty undone to avoid ridicule or ill-usage?

### III.

Have I used any oath?

Have I used God's Name in common without thinking of it?

Have I used any bad expressions, or indecent language?

Have I broken any promises?

Do I remember that, in being a Christian, I bear the name of Christ, and so am bound to be like Him?

Do I think how I am bound, by Baptism and Confirmation, to serve God?

Do I read the Bible carefully, and every day a little?

Do I ever repeat any part for a joke, or without care and reverence?

### IV.

Do I love Sunday the best of all days? Do I ever waste any of it?

Am I very particular not to miss going to Church, whatever I am doing; whether I go home to see my parents, or go out to see friends, or have any friends at home, or am so busy that I have very little time to spare?

Do I spend Sunday in as good and holy a way as I can?

V.

Do I behave as I ought to my father and mother, and to those kind friends who are like parents to me?

Do I obey them readily and cheerfully? or am I rude to them, or sulky? or do I deceive them, and go where they forbid me?

Am I kind to my brothers and sisters?

Do I give up my will to theirs?

Do I submit to my master and mistress, to the laws of the land, to magistrates, to my clergyman, to upper servants?

Am I ever impertinent, or saucy ?

Do I give to my parents all the earnings I can possibly spare, and take a pleasure in helping to maintain them ?

## VI.

Do I ever give way to passion ?  
Am I fighting against it, and trying hard to overcome it ?

Do I ever wish to do any person harm ?

Have I put any one else into a passion ?

Have I used any passionate words ?  
Have I struck any one ?

Have I enticed any one to do wrong ?  
or have I gone with any one to do wrong ?

## VII.

Have I said or done any indecent thing, or been glad to listen to any indecent talk ?

Have I looked at wrong things ?

Have I had any indecent thoughts,  
and gone on thinking them ?

Have I eaten or drunk too much, or  
eaten greedily ?

Have I drunk more than was good  
for me, though I may not have been  
tipsy ?

Do I think much about my dress ?  
Do I dress beyond my station, and  
waste my money on clothes ?

### VIII.

Have I ever stolen anything ? If I  
have, have I given it back, or done the  
best in my power to make it good ?

Have I cheated any one in any way,  
asking too much for what I had to sell,  
or not being willing to give as much  
for a thing as it was worth ?

Have I wasted my master's time ?

Have I paid my servants and labour-  
*ers the full value of their services ?*

Have I done any mischief to other persons' goods, breaking hedges or windows, leaving their things about, or letting my children do them damage?

Have I been careful of any thing that was lent to me? and have I paid back, or tried my very best to pay back, any money I have borrowed? Have I run into debt at any shop? Am I trying, all I possibly can, to pay the whole?

## IX.

Have I told any untruth?

Have I said anything about a neighbour that was not strictly true?

Have I talked about his faults?

Have I judged any one guilty of a fault, when I had not clearly proved it?

Am I fond of talking?

Do I try to bridle my tongue?

## X.

Do I wish for things which God has not given me?

Am I jealous of other people having better things or more things than I have?

Am I very desirous after spiritual gifts, to become more holy and heavenly-minded?

*Pride.*

Do I like to think about myself, as being clever, or wise, or good?

Do I boast of myself as being a little higher in life than my neighbours?  
Do I despise any one?

Do I wish to be noticed and praised?

If I can do anything well, or if I do a thing right, am I careful in my heart, and in speaking to others, to give God all the honour?

*Selfishness.*

*Do I let other persons give up their*

ways to me, and fight to have what I wish for?

Do I find pleasure in seeing others pleased, or am I only bent on my own pleasure?

*The World.*

Am I very fond of amusement? Are my amusements always lawful? Do I give up an amusement, when I find it does me harm?

Do I allow my amusements to take such hold of my thoughts, as to interrupt me at my prayers, and at church? Do I ever give up my prayers or Church for them?

Do I pay more attention to what my neighbours or great people think, than to what God thinks?

Am I able to do my daily work more cheerfully, as being God's Will?

Do I think continually that "the world passeth away, and the lust



thereof"? Am I chiefly bent on making sure of a home which faileth not?


Do I try to care less for all things of this life, and to feel that if I have Christ for my portion, I have "all things"?

Do I try to use all the good things God has given me—health, sickness, money, strength, youth, age, skill—for His glory?

Do I every day remember that I shall have to give account to God for everything, small and great?

When trouble comes, and I find a difficulty, or seem to be in danger, do I fly to God immediately and try to rest upon Him?

Am I more anxious than I was to know the truth about myself? Am I angry when anyone tells me of a fault, or thankful for the opportunity of *correcting* it?



Do I meddle with other people's business?

Do I try to take notice of all the mercies which God bestows upon me?

Am I much disturbed by *little* vexations? Do I seem to be getting the better of it?

When I have done wrong, do I go to God *at once* and confess it, or wait till perhaps the impression has begun to wear off?

Do I compare myself with others, or with the holy Law of God?

What do I do in any way for the good of others? Is it all I can do? Is there no way in which I could do more good?

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IV. In conclusion, I have now only to furnish you with some helps towards preserving the great blessing which you receive in Holy Communion. If, like birds around the sower, Satan

is always at hand to pick up and carry away any good seed which is not immediately taken deep into the heart, he is more than ever busy about us when we come away from the Holy Altar. He knows what an opportunity, so to speak, it is for him; and he will always make the most of it. Our work is not all accomplished when we have eaten and drunk the Sacred Elements; very much depends, as to our spiritual benefit, upon what we do afterwards. We need to watch, and guard, and nourish the Precious Gift. Begin at once.

1. Behave with particular reverence all the remainder of the day. Go quietly out of church, and from church to your home, and do not begin at once to talk on common subjects. Perhaps you may see other persons not so particular; but do you take care of yourself. As soon as you get home, go by *yourself*, if you can, and say a short

prayer, the same, if you like, that you said when you returned from the Altar-rails. If you are able, go to church again that day. Do not mix with common company more than you are obliged. Spend the day by yourself, reading good books, or in talking of good things with other friends. Keep constantly in mind what a great gift you have within you, that you have to take care of.

2. Be very very watchful against temptation. Satan will very likely tempt you more than usual, perhaps to your old sins, perhaps to something new. If he seems to leave you quiet for a little, depend upon it he will tempt you again very soon. But you are all the stronger to resist and overcome his assault. There is more with you than with him. You have "the stronger than he," who can overpower the "strong man armed."

3. Try to keep the holy feelings which you have had in Church. The world into which you return is God's enemy, and even your duties in the world are likely to draw your heart away from your dear Saviour. Try, therefore, continually to raise your thoughts up to Him, and remember His Love, and His bitter Sufferings for you, and try to care for nothing so much as for Him. Remember now that you are more bound than ever to serve Him wholly. You were His servant before, you had received great things from Him; but now you have bound yourself to Him afresh, and more closely, and you have received greater gifts than ever. Try to remember how you felt before the Altar, that you would serve Him for ever. But feelings will wear out, and will pass away. If you cannot *feel* as you *did then*, try and do the same as if

you felt, and that is much better than feeling.

4. Pray that God will continue His grace to you, and that Jesus Christ will abide with you. It was thus that the two disciples going to Emmaus had the honour and privilege of knowing as well as entertaining Him. They "constrained Him, saying, Abide with us." He will tarry with you as long as ever you will constrain Him by your prayers. Every day, therefore, of the week following, say the following prayer.

"O Gracious Saviour, I thank Thee for having received me to eat and drink at Thy Table. I pray Thee, abide with me still, now that I have returned to my duties in the world. Preserve me from sin, and from forgetting Thee, and make me more fit to live, and more fit to die; Who livest and reignest with the Father and the

Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*"

Let me, before we part, entreat you to come to this Sacrament *as often as ever you can*. Do not let the intervals between your Communions be longer than you can help. If you *can* come every fortnight, or even every week, do so. Then, if you attend to my suggestions, you will every day pray either for grace to keep what you have received, or for grace to receive more worthily what is awaiting you.

Blessed, blessed are ye who are invited to this Feast! Thrice blessed ye who accept the invitation, and are drawn near to Christ! See that you live up to it. It is your Food now, your Food in death, the pledge of your admission to the Eternal Banquet in glory!

God grant that this little work may *be a help to you*. Is it too much for

me to ask, that, if you find it a help,  
you will pray God that He will do  
good to the soul of him who has put it  
together? May we meet around the  
Throne hereafter!

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## HYMNS.

BREAD of the World, in mercy broken,  
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed,  
By Whom the words of life were spoken,  
And in Whose death our sins are dead;  
Look on the heart by sorrow broken,  
Look on the tears by sinners shed,  
And be Thy feast to us the token,  
That by Thy grace our souls are fed.

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BREAD of Heaven, on Thee we feed,  
For Thy Flesh is meat indeed;  
Ever may our souls be fed  
With this true and living Bread;  
Day by day with strength supplied,  
Through the life of Him Who died.

Vine of Heaven! Thy Blood supplies  
This blest cup of sacrifice;  
'Tis Thy Wounds our healing give;  
To Thy Cross we look and live:  
Jesu! may we ever be  
Rooted, grafted, Lord, in Thee. Amen.



WHEN I survey the wondrous Cross,  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the Cross of Christ my God;  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to His Blood.

See, from His Head, His Hands, His Feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;  
Did e'er such Love and Sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a Crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

To Him Who gave His Son to die,  
To Him Whose Dying bids me live,  
To Him, the Spirit Blest, will I  
My heart, my life, my spirit give. Amen.

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SING we now, our voice upraising,  
Sing the Cross in mournful strain,  
Tell the Sorrows all amazing,  
Tell the Wounds, the dying Pain,  
Which the Saviour, God Incarnate,  
Sinless bore, for sinners slain.

He the cruel scourge enduring,  
Ransom for our sins to pay,

By His stripes transgressors curing,  
Raising those who wounded lay ;  
Soothed our griefs, and bore our sorrows,  
And removed our pains away.

He to freedom hath restored us  
By the very bonds He bare ;  
And His Sacred Wounds afford us  
Each a stream of mercy rare ;  
Piercèd by the nails, He draws us  
To the Cross, and keeps us there.

When His painful Life was ended,  
From that Fount, His wounded Side,  
Blood and Water straight descended,  
Each a Sacramental Tide ;  
One from sin to wash and cleanse us,  
One to feed our souls, applied.

## APPENDIX.

*One earnest word I wish to say to those persons who have the great privilege of weekly Communion. I pray you, do not think that you need not prepare so diligently because you can come so often. On the contrary, your*

*whole life will be a state of continued preparation. Use the Questions of Self-examination very carefully; observe very closely every fault, and try more and more to live up to your great privilege. Think, oh! think, what a privilege it is to come so constantly so very near to Jesus Christ, and how very holy you ought to be, showing every week to everybody that you "have been with Jesus." This privilege is what our blessed Lord and the Church undoubtedly intend for us. We are coming short of what we might have if we are without it: and when we have it we must take care to use it as worthily as we can.*



